

A Regular Meeting of the City Council of the City of Hickory was held in the Council Chamber of the Municipal Building on Tuesday, June 15, 2021, at 7:00 p.m., with the following members present:

Tony Wood	Hank Guess	David L. Williams
Charlotte Williams	Aldermen	David P. Zagaroli
Danny Seaver		Jill Patton

A quorum was present.

Also, present were City Manager Warren Wood, Assistant City Manager Rick Beasley, Deputy City Manager Rodney Miller, Deputy City Attorney Arnita Dula, Deputy City Clerk Crystal B. Mundy and City Clerk Debbie D. Miller

- I. Mayor Guess called the meeting to order. All Council members were present with Alderman Williams attending simultaneously by electronic communication via Zoom and Alderman Zagaroli arriving at 7:01 p.m.
- II. Invocation by Rabbi Dennis Jones, Temple Beth Shalom
- III. Pledge of Allegiance
- IV. Special Presentations
- V. Persons Requesting to Be Heard

Mayor Guess asked everyone to silence their cellphones or any other electronic devices during the meeting. He noted the arrival of Alderman Zagaroli and Alderman Williams was participating via Zoom.

- A. Ms. Daria Jackson, 133 17th Street SE, Hickory, addressed City Council. Her concern was the kids, they were bored, and there was nothing to do. When she was growing-up they had pools to go to. They have nothing and that was a shame. She knew Brown Penn and the Parks and Recreation do what they can. However, the kids over at Civitan were sitting there on the brick wall, they do not have anything to do. Idle hands were the devil's workshop. They were going to find something to do, and it was probably going to be something they were not going to like. Their problem was everybody's problem whether black, white, blue, or green, they all get in trouble if they have nothing to do. She applauded Brown Penn and all that they do. When you have parents that work, they were not going to take time to put their kids in the car and take them to go play basketball or football somewhere. She had a bike when she was growing up, and they would ride to where they needed to go to. But those kids are not getting that same thing. When she was growing up, she lived in Colonial House Apartments, and in the summertime, they automatically went up to College Park's field and played football in the summertime. They just went through the fence, and nobody said anything. All of a sudden, she was hearing that they were worried about insurance and being sued, and the kids have nothing to do. And if they do not start doing something soon, she was afraid they were going to have the same summer they had, she thought in 1993. It was a horrible year. They had about 2 or 3 people killed on South Center Street. They were already beginning to shoot again. She had a friend who called her who was distraught about two weeks ago. She had picked up a group of boys and they wanted to go over to the fair. She gave them a ride. No problem. They said they were bored and had nothing to do. She told them they had to find something to do. After she dropped those boys off, between the ages of 12 and 15, somebody called and said be careful one of those boys has a gun. They have to have something to do. That was not a Black Lives Matter Movement, that was everybody's movement. Because some way, somehow, they were going to become somebody else's problem if they do not take care of them. If there were other organizations that were willing to help, she believed that the City needed to start working with those other organizations in any way they could.

Mayor Guess thanked Ms. Jackson. He welcomed and thanked Deputy City Attorney Arnita Dula for filling in for City Attorney John Crone.

- VI. Approval of Minutes
 - A. Regular Meeting of June 1, 2021.

Alderman Patton moved, seconded by Alderman Zagaroli that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 1, 2021, be approved. The motion carried unanimously.
 - B. Special Meeting of June 9, 2021.

Alderman Patton moved, seconded by Alderman Seaver that the Minutes of the Special Meeting of June 9, 2021, be approved. The motion carried unanimously.
- VII. Reaffirmation and Ratification of Second Readings. Votes recorded on first reading will be reaffirmed and ratified on second reading unless Council Members change their votes and so indicate on second reading.

Alderwoman Patton moved, seconded by Alderwoman Williams that the following be reaffirmed and ratified on second reading. The motion carried unanimously.

- A. Approval of Amending the Traffic Ordinance to Reduce the Speed Limit along 5th Avenue NW, from 3rd Avenue Drive NW to 9th Street NW, and 10th Street NW from 4th Avenue NW to 4th Avenue Drive NE from 35 mph to 25 mph. **(First Reading Vote: Unanimous)**
 - B. Budget Revision Number 22. **(First Reading Vote: Unanimous)**
 - C. City Manager's FY2021-2022 Recommended Budget. **(First Reading Vote: Unanimous)**
 - D. Budget Revision Number 23. **(First Reading Vote: Unanimous)**
- VIII. Consent Agenda: All items below will be enacted by vote of City Council. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Council Member so requests. In which event, the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered under Item IX.

Mayor Guess referred to Item "B" on the Consent Agenda and advised the meeting in July was traditionally canceled.

Alderwoman Patton moved, seconded by Alderman Seaver approval of the Consent Agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

- A. Approved a Third Amendment to the Option and Lease Agreement for Electronic Communication Equipment (Lease Agreement) and the Memorandum of Lease with New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC (AT&T Mobility Corporation) (Memorandum).

Staff requests approval of a Third Amendment to the Option and Lease Agreement for Electronic Communication Equipment ("Lease Agreement") and Memorandum of Lease with New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC (AT&T Mobility Corporation) ("Memorandum"). The City of Hickory and New Cingular's predecessor entered into an original site Lease Agreement on September 14, 2004, for electronic communication located on Public Services property at 1441 9th Avenue NE. The original agreement was first amended December 22, 2011. A second amendment to the Lease Agreement was approved September 16, 2014. The original Lease Agreement is set to expire October 31, 2025. The Third Amendment will extend the current term which is set to expire October 31, 2025. Amendment number three proposed to extend the term for five additional renewal terms of five years each for a total of 25 years. It also resets the monthly rent to \$3,248.00 per month beginning November 1, 2025. The rent is subject to a 10 percent increase beginning November 1, 2025, and thereafter 10 percent at the beginning of each remaining extension term. The other conditions and terms of the Lease Agreement will remain the same. The Memorandum summarizes the proposed extension of the Lease Agreement's term. Staff recommends approval of a Third Amendment to the Option and Lease Agreement for Electronic Communication Equipment ("Lease Agreement") and the Memorandum of Lease with New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC (AT&T Mobility Corporation) ("Memorandum").

Legal Notice was advertised in a newspaper having general circulation in the Hickory area on May 15, 2021.

- B. Approved a Resolution for Cancellation of the July 6, 2021, City Council Meeting.

Be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Hickory that the regularly scheduled City Council Meeting for July 6, 2021, be cancelled. (This meeting in July has traditionally been cancelled by the City Council due to the July 4th Holiday.)

RESOLUTION NO. 21-27

Be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Hickory that the regularly scheduled City Council Meeting for July 6, 2021, be cancelled.

- C. Approved the Write-Off of Uncollectible Accounts for Fiscal Year 2020-2021.

Staff requests City Council's approval to write-off uncollectible accounts totaling \$178,485.63, in accordance with North Carolina General Statutes. In accordance with the North Carolina General Statutes, a list of accounts to be written off is submitted for Council's approval each year, in conjunction with the annual audit. North Carolina General Statutes establish that all street assessments, demolitions, nuisance violations, and property taxes that are over ten years old are no longer collectible and should be written off in conjunction with the annual audit. For the current fiscal year 2020-2021, there are \$89,944.99 in unpaid property taxes and \$4,633 in unpaid demolition billings which exceed the ten-year limitation. The City of Hickory's Accounting Division requires

all other accounts that are over eighteen months in arrears be written off to comply with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles in order to represent financial assets of the City more fairly on the balance sheet. For the current fiscal year, this amount is \$83,907.64. Current fiscal year write-offs total \$178,485.63, compared to \$185,222.27 for FY 2019-2020. Even though these accounts will be written off, the Finance Department will continue to pursue collection of the debts. All eligible accounts over \$50 are submitted to the North Carolina Debt Setoff Program for collection. As of May 27, 2021, the City of Hickory has collected \$24,759.83 from the garnishment of North Carolina State income tax refunds and North Carolina State lottery winnings during this current fiscal year. Staff recommends approval to write-off uncollectible accounts for Fiscal Year 2020-2021.

- D. Accepted the Bid and Approved the Contract with Fuller & Co., Construction, LLC in the Amount of \$5,624,051.11 for the Murray Basin Sewer Project.

Staff requests Council's approval of the bid and award of a contract with Fuller & Co. Construction, LLC, for the Murray Basin Sewer Project (SRF CS370389-22) in the amount of \$5,624,051.11. The Murray Basin is one of the older sections of the City of Hickory's collection system and serves a densely developed portion of the City of Hickory's southeast quadrant from Springs Road to Tate Boulevard. Currently, wastewater discharge is being treated at the Conover North Facility and this project will convey flows to the City of Hickory Henry Fork Facility. The Murray Basin project includes the addition of multiple pumping stations, force main and the upgrade of existing gravity sanitary sewer lines. Flows from the existing system relayed back to existing City of Hickory Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) will result in a net savings of approximately \$400,000 annually. Additionally, the additional flows of the Murray Basin into the Henry Fork WWTF will be a welcome addition as the facility currently is running at approximately 27 percent capacity. The Murray Basin sewer project was advertised, and bids were opened on April 29, 2021. Three contractors submitted competitive bids on the project and were as follows: Fuller & Co. Construction, LLC - \$5,624,051.11; Buckeye Bridge, LLC - \$5,977,734; Two Brothers Utilities, LLC -\$7,216,160. Clean Water State Revolving Funds (CWSRF) have been approved for the funding of this project at a low interest loan of 1.04 percent for 20-years. Staff recommends Council's approval of the bid and award of a contract with Fuller & Co. Construction, LLC, for the Murray Basin sewer project (SRF CS370389-22) in the amount of \$5,624,051.11.

- E. Approved on First Reading Amending the Traffic Ordinance to Reduce the Posted Speed Limit Along Main Avenue NE from 7th Avenue NE to 1st Avenue NE and along Main Avenue NW from 9th Street NW to 4th Street NW from 35 mph to 25 mph.

Staff requests Council's approval of amending the Traffic Ordinance to reduce the posted speed limit along Main Avenue NE from 7th Avenue NE to 1st Avenue NE and along Main Avenue NW from 9th Street NW to 4th Street NW to 25 mph. With City Walk almost complete, there have been and will be an uptick in pedestrian and bicycle activity along Main Avenue NE/NW. As the roadway dynamics have changed, reducing from four-lanes to three-lanes and adding a 10-foot path, traffic speeds need to reflect these changes to help make it safer for the new users. Currently the speed limit along Main Avenue NE/NW is 35 mph, except in the Central Business District where it is 20 mph. Traffic Division staff received the request to determine if a speed limit reduction was warranted. Due to the higher volumes of pedestrians and cyclists along the route and the closer proximity to live traffic, reducing the speed limit to 25 mph in the area is justified. The necessary sign modifications along the roadway can be performed as a normal part of the Traffic Division's signs/markings shop operations. Staff recommends Council's approval of amending the Traffic Ordinance to reduce the posted speed limit along Main Avenue NE from 7th Avenue NE to 1st Avenue NE and along Main Avenue NW from 9th Street NW to 4th Street NW to 25 mph.

ORDINANCE NO. 21-20

AN ORDINANCE OF THE HICKORY CITY COUNCIL AMENDING THE TRAFFIC ORDINANCE AUTHORIZED IN THE HICKORY CODE OF ORDINANCES – ARTICLE III, SECTION 18-81

WHEREAS, Article III of the City of Hickory Code of Ordinances be and is hereby amended through the modification of the official maps authorized therein as follows, to wit:

Amend the Traffic Ordinance by reducing the speed limit along Main Ave NE from 7th Ave NE to 1st Ave NE and on Main Ave NW between 9th St NW and 4th St NW 25 mph.

All ordinances or provisions of the Hickory City Code of Ordinances which are not in conformance with the provisions of the Amendment occurring herein are repealed as of the effective date of this Ordinance.

This Ordinance shall become effective immediately upon adoption.

- F. Approved Implementing an All-way Stop at the Intersection of 14th Avenue NW at 5th Street Circle NW.

Staff requests Council's approval to implement an all-way stop at the intersection of 14th Avenue NW at 5th Street Circle NW. City Council implemented a Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program that enables citizens to request measures to improve traffic safety in the area where they own property. Citizens requesting traffic calming measures are required to complete and submit a petition with 75 percent of properties in favor of implementation for the request to move forward. Traffic Division staff received the completed petition from property owners along 14th Avenue NW from 6th Street NW to 4th Street NW, along 4th Street NW from 14th Avenue NW to property at 1313 4th Street NW, and along 5th Street Circle NW with regards to the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program and have found the property owners in compliance with the guidelines. The petition qualifies for a speed limit reduction on the roadway listed. Thirty-nine properties were included in the petition and thirty-three properties signed in favor of implementation. This represents at least 75 percent approval, which meets the requirement. The necessary sign modifications along the roadway can be performed as a normal part of the Traffic Division's signs/markings shop operations. Staff recommends Council's approval to implement an all-way stop at the intersection of 14th Avenue NW at 5th Street Circle NW.

- G. Called for a Public Hearing for Consideration of a Voluntary Contiguous Annexation of Property Owned by REC Group LLC and RECL NC LLC, Containing Approximately 137.299 acres of Property, located between Short Road and Eller Drive, Identified as PINs 3711-1684-4173, 3711-1961-5646, 3711-1962-2278, 3711-1962-8108, 3711-1672-6809, 3711-1683-7965, and 3711-1684-9988. (Authorized the Public Hearing for July 20, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of the Julian G. Whitener Municipal Building).

RESOLUTION NO. 21-28

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE CLERK TO INVESTIGATE A PETITION RECEIVED UNDER G.S. 160A-31 AND/OR 160A-58.1, AS AMENDED

WHEREAS, a petition from REC Group LLC and RECL NC LLC requesting annexation of an area described in a petition was received on June 1, 2021, by the City Council of the City of Hickory; and

WHEREAS, G.S. 160A-31 and G.S. 160A-58.1 provide that the sufficiency of the petition shall be investigated by the Clerk before further annexation proceedings may take place; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Hickory deems it advisable to proceed in response to this request for annexation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HICKORY:

THAT, the Clerk is hereby directed to investigate the sufficiency of the above-described petition and to certify as soon as possible to the City Council the result of her investigation.

CERTIFICATE OF SUFFICIENCY

TO THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HICKORY, NORTH CAROLINA:

I, Debbie D. Miller, City Clerk, do hereby certify that I have investigated the petition attached hereto and have found as a fact that said petition is signed by all owners of real property lying in the area described therein, in accordance with G.S. 160A-31 and/or G.S. 160A-58.1, as amended:

Property of REC Group LLC and RECL NC LLC Located between Short Road and Eller Drive, Newton and Hickory, North Carolina, containing 137.299 acres more or less, and identified as PINs 371116844173, 371119615646, 371119622278, 371119628108, 371116726809, 371116837965, and 371116849988.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the City of Hickory this 1st day of June 2021.

/s/ Debbie D. Miller, City Clerk

RESOLUTION 21-29

RESOLUTION FIXING DATE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON QUESTION OF ANNEXATION,
PURSUANT TO G.S. 160A-31 OR G.S. 160A-58.1, AS AMENDED

WHEREAS, a petition requesting annexation of the area described herein has been received; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Hickory has, by Resolution, directed the clerk to investigate the sufficiency thereof; and

WHEREAS, certification by the Clerk as to the sufficiency of said petition has been made.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HICKORY:

- Section 1: That a public hearing on the question of annexation of the area described herein will be held at 7:00 p.m. on July 20, 2021, in the Council Chambers of the Julian G. Whitener Municipal Building, located at 76 North Center Street, Hickory, North Carolina.
- Section 2: The area proposed for annexation is described as follows:
- Property of REC Group LLC and RECL NC LLC located between Short Road and Eller Drive, Newton and Hickory, North Carolina, containing 137.299 acres more or less, and identified as PINs 371116844173, 371119615646, 371119622278, 371119628108, 371116726809, 371116837965, and 371116849988.
- Section 3: Notice of said public hearing shall be published in The Hickory Daily Record, a newspaper having general circulation in the City of Hickory, at least ten (10) days prior to the date of said public hearing.

RESOLUTION NO. 21-30

A RESOLUTION DETERMINING THE INTENT TO ANNEX INTO THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF HICKORY CERTAIN PROPERTY OWNED BY REC GROUP LLC AND RECL NC LLC AND CALLING FOR A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE SAME

WHEREAS, REC Group LLC and RECL NC LLC are the owners of certain real property as described herein, which property is located between Short Road and Eller Drive, Newton and Hickory, North Carolina, containing 137.299 acres more or less, and identified as PINs 371116844173, 371119615646, 371119622278, 371119628108, 371116726809, 371116837965, and 371116849988; and

WHEREAS, such property is currently located in the City's extra-territorial jurisdictional (ETJ); and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the health, safety, and well-being of the residents of the City of Hickory to annex such property into the corporate limits of the City of Hickory as authorized by N.C.G.S. Section 160A-31; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Hickory City Council, sitting in open session this 15th day of June 2021, at a regularly scheduled meeting of the governing body of said Council, duly called and posted in accordance with the statutes of the State of North Carolina, as follows:

- Section 1: That the Hickory City Council does determine that it is in the best interest of the health, safety, and well-being of the residents of the City of Hickory to annex the property described hereinafter into the corporate limits of the City of Hickory.
- Section 2: That a public hearing on the question of annexation of the area described herein will be held at 7:00 p.m. on July 20, 2021, in the Council Chambers of the Julian G. Whitener Municipal Building, located at 76 North Center Street, Hickory, North Carolina.
- Section 3: The same being that property reflected on map entitled REC Group LLC/RECL NC LLC Voluntary Contiguous Annexation Map 1 City Boundary, subject property outlined in red; REC Group LLC/RECL NC LLC Voluntary Contiguous Annexation Map 2, Current Zoning subject property outlined in red; REC Group LLC/RECL NC LLC Voluntary

Contiguous Annexation Map 3, Aerial Photography, subject property outlined in red.

Section 4: Notice of said public hearing shall be published in The Hickory Daily Record, a newspaper having general circulation in the City of Hickory, at least ten (10) days prior to the date of said public hearing.

- H. Approval of a Resolution Regarding Condemnation of Properties for Temporary and Permanent Easements and Right-of-Ways for Construction of the Multi-Use Path System for the Historic Ridgeview Walk.

Staff requests Council to consider a Resolution regarding condemnation of properties for temporary and permanent easements and rights-of-ways for construction of a multi-use path system (Historic Ridgeview Walk). The Historic Ridgeview Walk (formerly referred to as the Book Walk) is part of the larger Hickory Trail multi-use path system and bond program that seeks to increase quality of life for residents and spur economic revitalization by providing pedestrian and bicycle connectivity throughout the City. Historic Ridgeview Walk will specifically provide this connectivity within the Ridgeview community and connect the Ridgeview community to Downtown Hickory and U.S. 70. Per North Carolina General Statutes Chapter 40A the City of Hickory has the power of eminent domain to acquire any property to improve streets, sidewalks, and establish or improve recreational facilities. The City has found it is in the public interest to acquire certain easements and rights-of-way for the construction of the 1.2 mile, 10-foot-wide multi-use pathway for pedestrian and bicycle connectivity from the City Walk in Downtown Hickory, through the Ridgeview Community, to U.S. 70. The proposed resolution authorizes staff and legal counsel to institute the condemnation proceedings on these properties. Staff recommends Council's approval of the Resolution regarding condemnation of properties for temporary and permanent easements and rights-of-ways for construction of a multi-use path system for the Historic Ridgeview Walk.

RESOLUTION NO. 21-31
RESOLUTION OF THE HICKORY CITY COUNCIL REGARDING
CONDEMNATION OF PROPERTIES FOR TEMPORARY AND PERMANENT
EASEMENTS AND RIGHT-OF-WAYS FOR CONSTRUCTION
OF A MULTI-USE PATH SYSTEM

RECITALS:

WHEREAS, the City of Hickory (the "City") has the power of eminent domain and may acquire by purchase, gift, or condemnation any property for the purposes of, among other things, opening, widening, extending, or improving roads, streets, alleys, and sidewalks and establishing, enlarging, or improving parks, playgrounds, and other recreational facilities; and

WHEREAS, the City is authorized to institute any and all necessary legal actions under Chapter 40A of the North Carolina General Statutes to condemn and appropriate easements and right-of-ways for the above stated purposes; and

WHEREAS, the City has determined that it is necessary and in the public interest to acquire certain easements, either on a temporary or permanent basis, and fee simple right-of-ways in properties located in Hickory, North Carolina for the purpose of constructing a 10-foot-wide multi-use pathway to connect the Ridgeview community to Downtown Hickory and US Highway 70. The pathway will travel from the City Walk in Downtown Hickory down South Center Street, west across City-owned property at the Historic Ridgeview Public Library, and south on 1st Street SW to the current Ridgeview Branch Library; the path will then go west on 7th Avenue SW past Ridgeview Recreation Center, before turning south and following 4th Street to US Highway 70 at the Walmart Neighborhood Market, as generally shown on the Overall Plan and Key Sheet prepared by Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., dated September 10, 2020, a copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit A (the "Project"). The pathway is commonly referred to as the "Historic Ridgeview Walk" or "Book Walk." The City has determined that the taking is reasonably necessary to provide pedestrian and bicycle connectivity from the City Walk in Downtown Hickory, through the Ridgeview community, to US Highway 70; and

WHEREAS, the City finds that the acquisition, expansion and improvement of easements and right-of-ways over Lot Nos. 6, 13, 14, 25, 26, and 27, as shown on the plats prepared by Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., copies of which are attached hereto as Exhibit B, is necessary and serves a public purpose of improving the function and appearance of those areas and serves to provide bicycle and pedestrian connectivity and safety in the Project area; and

WHEREAS, the City has determined that it will be necessary to acquire by condemnation, either on a temporary or permanent basis, portions Lot Nos. 6, 12, 13, 14, 25, 26, 27 and 30

as shown on Exhibit B (the "Condemned Properties") to complete the Project.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that:

1. The City adopts as true and correct the foregoing recitals and incorporates them as findings herein.
2. For the purposes specified above, it is necessary, practical, and in the best interest of the public and the City that the City acquire, in its name, such easements, either on a temporary or permanent basis, and fee simple right-of-ways in the Condemned Properties as may be required and which are necessary for completion of the Project.
3. The City, its officers, employees and attorneys, including designated outside counsel, be and are hereby authorized and directed to proceed to take the necessary steps to institute and prosecute such necessary actions and proceed as may be proper for the acquisition of easements, either on a temporary or permanent basis, and fee simple right-of-ways in said Condemned Properties by eminent domain proceedings pursuant to Chapter 40A of the North Carolina General Statutes, and to prepare, sign, execute, serve, publish and file in the name of the City all eminent domain papers, affidavits and pleadings and said attorneys are authorized to have prepared such other instruments and documents as may be necessary in connection therewith.
4. The City finds and determines that the Condemned Properties are necessary for the public purposes of construction of the Project and hereby authorizes the acquisition of said Condemned Properties by eminent domain proceedings. The City further authorizes the City attorney, her staff or designated outside counsel to correct minor errors or scrivener's errors to said descriptions, if any, with regard to the condemnation proceeding without further action of this council.
5. The City Director is authorized to have the construction plans updated, revised, or corrected, and to utilize such plans in the condemnation action, including committing to said plans, updates, revisions, or corrections, without further action by this council.
6. The City finds and determines that just compensation for the taking of the Condemned Properties in each particular case is as follows:
 - A. DOROTHY G. SHUFORD AND VIVIAN BROOKS
Lot 6
DB 1545, PG 555, Catawba County ROD
Tax PIN 370211576076
Just Compensation for Take of Interests in Lot 6: \$675.00
 - B. MARTHA G. WILSON, HEIRS
Lot 13
DB 2275, PG 1289, Catawba County ROD
Tax PIN 370207577538
Just Compensation for Take of Interests in Lot 13: \$6,800.00
 - C. GUSSIE SHUFORD CONNOR, HEIRS
Lot 14
DB 287, PG 152, Catawba County ROD
Tax PIN 370207577664
Just Compensation for Take of Interests in Lot 14: \$625.00
 - D. MONRO MUFFLER BRAKE, INC.
Lots 25
DB 3361, PG 1090, Catawba County ROD
Tax PIN 370207681178
Lot 26
DB 3361, PG 1093, Catawba County ROD
Tax PIN 370207681282
Lot 27
DB 3361, PG 1151, Catawba County ROD
Tax PIN 370207682328
Just Compensation for Take of Interests in Lot 25-27: \$49,025.00

THIS RESOLUTION shall become effective immediately upon adoption.

- I. Approved a Microenterprise Grant Agreement with Clarity-Life Coaching in the Amount of \$2,000.

In its 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development, the City of Hickory identified increasing entrepreneurship opportunities as a high priority need. The 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Annual Action Plans have \$33,000 allocated towards assistance for entrepreneurial activities. The program offers grants of up to \$4,000 for low-to-moderate income business owners for business property, inventory, necessary fixed assets, marketing and business promotion, or other improvements approved by the Business Development Committee. Applicants are required to submit a business plan and have a counseling session with a local business support organization. Catherine Lundberg has applied for a Microenterprise Grant to support and enhance her start-up business, Clarity-Life Coaching. The business offers coaching to individuals who desire to gain greater perspective in order to experience personal growth. The Business Development Committee reviewed the application and recommended approval of the grant in the amount of \$2,000. The grant funds will be used to pursue online training to enable her to give core value assessments and to purchase a new computer for her business among other aspects of starting her business. Staff recommends City Council's approval of the Microenterprise Grant agreement with Clarity-Life Coaching.

- J. Accepted the 2021 Urgent Repair Program Grant and Approval of the Assistance and Procurement Policies.

In December 2020, the City of Hickory Community Development Division applied for funding through the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency's Urgent Repair Program. The City of Hickory has been awarded \$75,000 through this program in order to assist approximately eight very low-income homeowners with urgently needed repairs in an amount not to exceed \$10,000 per housing unit. The City of Hickory will provide an additional \$5,000 in matching funds, which are available from Rental Rehabilitation program income. The total program budget will be \$80,000. The City of Hickory Community Development Department, in complying with the N.C. Housing Finance Agency's funding requirements for URP21, has prepared an Assistance Policy and Procurement Policy. These policies incorporate program requirements, applicant eligibility standards, and program capabilities. Upon approval by Hickory City Council, these policies will be submitted along with additional required information to the NC Housing Finance Agency. Upon receipt and acceptance by NCHFA, funds will be dispersed to the City of Hickory in order to begin repairs to eligible homes. Staff recommends City Council's acceptance of the 2021 Urgent Repair Program Grant and approval of the Assistance and Procurement Policies.

- K. Approved the Citizens' Advisory Committee Recommendations for Assistance through the City of Hickory's Housing Programs.

The following requests were considered by the Citizens' Advisory Committee at their regular meeting on June 3, 2021.

- Una Hunt, 1333 13th Street NE, Hickory, was recommended for approval of a Housing Rehabilitation Loan. The Citizens' Advisory Committee recommends approval for assistance not to exceed \$25,000 for repairs to her house. Assistance would be in the form of a zero percent interest deferred loan.
- Juanita Reid, 236 7th Street SW, Hickory, was recommended for approval of a Housing Rehabilitation Loan. The Citizens' Advisory Committee recommends approval for assistance not to exceed \$25,000 for repairs to her house. Assistance would be in the form of a zero percent interest deferred loan.
- LaShanda Robinson, 221 18th Avenue SE, Hickory, was recommended for approval of a Housing Rehabilitation Loan. The Citizens' Advisory Committee recommends approval for assistance not to exceed \$25,000 for repairs to her house. Assistance would be in the form of a zero percent interest deferred loan.
- Winslow Sherrill, 580 9th Avenue Drive SE, Hickory, was recommended for approval of a Housing Rehabilitation Loan. The Citizens' Advisory Committee recommends approval for assistance not to exceed \$25,000 for repairs to his house. Assistance would be in the form of a zero percent interest deferred loan.
- Gregory & Teresa Whitman, 1388 20th Avenue NE, Hickory, was recommended for approval of a Housing Rehabilitation Loan. The Citizens' Advisory Committee recommends approval for assistance not to exceed \$25,000 for repairs to their house. Assistance would be in the form of a zero percent interest deferred loan.

Funds are budgeted for this item through the City of Hickory's former Housing Rehabilitation Program income received in FY 2020 and/or program income received through the City of Hickory's Community Development Block Grant Program.

The following applicants are being recommended for approval for assistance under the City of Hickory's 2020 Urgent Repair Program. This program provides qualified low-income citizens with assistance for emergency related repairs not to exceed \$10,000.

- Ruby Heavner, 1174 1st Avenue SW, Hickory, up to 10,000.
- Barbara Heuer, 448 1st Street SW, Hickory, up to 10,000.
- Heather Lyerly, 1055 18th Avenue NW, Hickory, up to \$10,000.
- Shelley Tribble, 730 9th Avenue Drive SE, Hickory, up to 7,645.

The Citizens' Advisory Committee recommends approval of the aforementioned requests for assistance through the City of Hickory's housing assistance programs.

- L. Approved a Cemetery Deed from the City of Hickory to James Dula, Southside Cemetery, Plot N. Lot No. 17 and 18, Section 5. (Prepared by Deputy City Attorney Arnita Dula).

IX. Items Removed from Consent Agenda

X. Informational Item

XI. New Business:

A. Public Hearings

1. Approved on First Reading Amendments to Article III of Chapter 2 of the Hickory Code of Ordinances. – Presentation by Deputy City Attorney Arnita Dula.

The Hickory Regional Planning Commission was established in 1963 by a local act, North Carolina Session Law 1963-477 ("S.L. 1963-477"). The law created the organization and established the membership composition and terms of office. As mandated by S.L. 1963-477, the Hickory City Council ("Council") adopted Article III Planning Commission of Chapter 2 of the Code to establish the Hickory Regional Planning Commission. Article III also provided for the method of appointment of the planning commission's members. S.L. 1963-477 was subsequently amended in 1967 by Session Law 1967-214. The amendment made a minor change to the wording of paragraph three. The City of Hickory has pursued a local act – Senate Bill 192 (SB 192) - to repeal S.L. 1963-477 as amended by S.L. 1967-214. SB 192 also requires the City to adopt an ordinance that provides for the appointment of a new planning commission pursuant to Article 3 of Chapter 160D of the North Carolina General Statutes. Amending Article III of Chapter 2 of the Code will enable the City to comply with SB 192's mandate and Chapter 160D requirements. The proposed amendments keep the existing name – Hickory Regional Planning Commission. The amendments also establish the planning commission's members' composition, terms of service, and powers and duties. Staff recommends Council hold a public hearing to consider and adopt amendments to Article III of Chapter 2 of the Hickory Code of Ordinances.

This public hearing was advertised in a newspaper having general circulation in the Hickory area on June 4, 2021.

City Manager Warren Wood asked Deputy City Attorney Arnita Dula to present Council with proposed amendments to Article III of Chapter 2 of the Hickory Code of Ordinances.

Deputy City Attorney Arnita Dula presented a PowerPoint. She explained this was an ordinance to amend Article III which dealt with the Planning Commission in Chapter 2, the Administration Chapter of the Hickory Code of Ordinances. She discussed the background. The Hickory Regional Planning Commission was established in 1963 via Session Law 477-1963, House Bill 721. That Bill required the Council to adopt an ordinance to establish the Planning Commission. City Council adopted the article that she would be addressing tonight. In 1967, Session Law 214-1967 amended Session Law 477-1963. She advised this was a wording change, it was not a major substantive change. Currently, Senate Bill 192 was adopted by the City's legislature, and it repealed Session Law 477-1963 and Session Law 214-1967. The Bill also mandates that the City adopt an ordinance to establish the Planning Commission, and that adoption has to be pursuant to Article III of Chapter 160-D of the General Statutes. The proposed amendments revised certain sections in Article III, Sections 2-96 through 2-102.

Deputy City Attorney Arnita Dula discussed Section 2-96 which dealt with the establishment, the commission's jurisdiction, and defining the Planning Commission. The name was going to remain the same. It would still be the Hickory Regional Planning Commission. It designated the City's planning area and also designated the Hickory Regional Planning Commission as the City's

Planning Commission because under the Statute Council actually could serve or another group could serve, but the Hickory Regional Planning Commission would still be designated in that capacity.

Deputy City Attorney Arnita Dula discussed Section 2-97 dealing with the composition, qualifications, and appointments terms. Currently the Planning Commission was 12 members. The proposed revision reduced that to nine members and established the membership composition. Each Ward would have one representative or one member. Catawba County would have two members and Burke County would have one member. Of these areas, there was the extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) in Catawba County and Burke County. Under the Statutes, there was a requirement for proportional representation. Section 2-97 continued with repealing the Session Law that established the Planning Commission, they were actually starting fresh. They could not have everyone start off serving a three-year term because they would all roll off at the same time. The initial terms were staggered. This was randomly done. Staff checked the minutes from that time and the Board of Adjustment actually established the staggered terms, but the minutes did not address how they went about it. She referred to the PowerPoint and pointed out the Wards and each member would serve the designated term for their initial term and then once their term ends, they were eligible to be appointed to unlimited three-year terms.

Deputy City Attorney Arnita Dula discussed Section 2-98 which dealt with meetings, compensation, and some of the things that the Planning Commission had the authority to do. The Planning Commission elects their officers, a chair, vice-chair, and a secretary. They would establish bylaws or rules to conduct business and meet once a month. All members had equal rights and privileges and they would serve without compensation. Additionally, they may create committees.

Deputy City Attorney Arnita Dula discussed Section 2-99, other powers, and duties. The City already has a comprehensive planning document. One of the newer things was to facilitate citizen engagement in the planning process so they could plan activities to engage citizens. They could develop recommended policies, ordinances, development regulations, administrative procedures, and amendments to the tech zoning map. They review those and make recommendations to City Council. They also hear special use permits and then any other duties that Council may direct. They would also continue to serve as the Board of Adjustment as the Planning Commission currently does. She asked for any questions.

Mayor Guess asked Ms. Dula to explain why they had to change it from what it was to what it is.

Deputy City Attorney Arnita Dula advised times change. First and foremost, there was a new Chapter 160-D, which had the planning regulations, and zoning regulations. This also gave them an opportunity to be more flexible in that Council, as a governing body, have control over how the Planning Commission was to be setup. Previously, it was determined by the State Legislature. It was established by a local act. They were very limited in making any kind of changes regarding the membership composition. In fact, they could not unless they did what they had done now and that was going to the Legislature to make those changes. She reiterated that it offers more flexibility. It fits with the times as they were doing with economic development as they were moving forward. This was a way for the Planning Commission to continue the work that it was doing in today's time.

Mayor Guess advised he knew the answer to that, but he wanted to make it for public record. He asked for any other questions from Council. He declared the public hearing open and asked if there was anyone present to speak in opposition to the proposal. No one appeared. He asked if there was anyone present to speak in favor of the proposal. No one appeared. Mayor Guess closed the public hearing.

Alderman Patton moved, seconded by Alderman Seaver approval of amendments to Article III of Chapter 2 of the Hickory Code of Ordinances. The motion carried unanimously.

ORDINANCE NO. 21-21

AN ORDINANCE OF THE HICKORY CITY COUNCIL AMENDING ARTICLE III PLANNING COMMISSION OF CHAPTER 2 ADMINISTRATION OF THE HICKORY CODE OF ORDINANCES

WHEREAS, the North Carolina General Assembly established the Hickory Regional Planning Commission in 1963 through a local act, Session Law 477 - 1963 ("S.L. 477-1963")/House Bill 721, which was subsequently amended by Session Law 214-1967 ("S.L. 214-1967") (House Bill 257); and

WHEREAS, the Hickory City Council adopted an ordinance - Article III of Chapter 2, as mandated by the local act, to establish the Hickory Regional Planning Commission; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly recently enacted Senate Bill 192 which repeals the prior local acts and mandates that the City of Hickory establish a planning commission via an ordinance pursuant to Article 3 of Chapter 160D of the General Statutes; and

WHEREAS, the Hickory City Council desires to amend Article III of Chapter 2 of the Code to comply with Senate Bill 192 and Article 3 of Chapter 160D.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HICKORY, THAT ARTICLE III OF CHAPTER 2 OF THE HICKORY CITY CODE BE AMENDED AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1: Amended.

a. Section 2-96 is deleted in its entirety and is replaced as follows.

Section 2-96. Established; jurisdiction; planning commission defined.

- (a) The Hickory Regional Planning Commission is hereby established pursuant to the authority granted by Senate Bill and Article 3 of Chapter 160D of the General Statutes.
- (b) The Hickory Regional Planning area shall be set forth in the City of Hickory's Official Zoning Map and its extraterritorial jurisdiction, which is incorporated herein by reference.
- (c) The Hickory Regional Planning Commission shall in this Code be designated as the planning commission.

b. Section 2- 97 is deleted in its entirety and is replaced as follows: . -

Section 2-97. Composition; qualifications, appointments, terms; vacancies; reappointments.

- (a) The planning commission shall consist of nine members. Six members shall reside within the corporate boundaries of the city with each ward having one representative appointed by the city council. Two members shall reside in Catawba County within the designated planning area outside the boundaries of any municipality. One member shall reside within the designated planning area in Burke County. The members residing in Catawba and Burke Counties shall be appointed by the mayor and approved by the city council after receipt of written recommendations for the appointments from the Catawba and Burke governing boards. The governing boards shall submit their recommendations to the mayor upon receipt of a request from the City.
- (b) All members shall serve for three-year terms provided that the initially appointed members shall serve staggered terms as follows: Of the six first appointed members who are residents of Hickory, two members shall serve a three-year term, two members shall serve a two-year term, and two members shall serve a one (year term. Of the members appointed who are residents of the designated planning area in Catawba County, one member shall serve a three-year term and the other member a one (1) year term. The member first appointed who is a resident of the designated planning area in Burke County shall serve a two-year term. Thereafter, all members shall be appointed to serve three-year terms. Any member shall be eligible for reappointment.
- (c) A vacancy occurring in the membership of the planning commission shall be filled for the unexpired term in the same manner as set forth in this section for other appointments. Any member shall be eligible for reappointment.

c. Section 2-98 is deleted in its entirety and is replaced as follows:

Sec. 2-98. - Officers; committees; rules; records; meetings; compensation.

- (a) The planning commission shall elect from its membership a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, and a secretary. The term of office of the chairperson shall be for a period of time as determined by the planning commission, but in no event shall such term exceed the term for which such member is appointed to the planning commission.
- (b) The planning commission may establish, and the chairperson shall appoint such committees from its membership as the commission may from time to time deem best.
- (c) The commission shall adopt such rules for the conduct of its business, not inconsistent with Chapter 160D, as it may deem necessary.
- (d) The commission shall meet at least once each month at such time and place as the commission may determine. Special meetings of the commission may be called by the chairperson, and all members shall be notified via email and/or regular mail at least five days in advance of any such special meeting.
- (e) All members, regardless of their place of residence shall have equal rights, privileges and duties regarding all matters coming before the commission.
- (f) Members of the commission shall serve without compensation; except, that members may be reimbursed from funds appropriated by the city for necessary travel expenses outside the regional planning area while engaged in work of the planning commission.

d. Sections 2-99 through 2-102 are deleted in their entirety and replaced as follows:

Sec. 2-99 Powers and duties

- (a) The planning commission shall have the following powers and duties:
 - (1) To prepare, review, maintain, monitor, and periodically update and recommend to the governing board a comprehensive plan, and such other plans as deemed appropriate, and conduct ongoing related research, data collection, mapping, and analysis.
 - (2) To facilitate and coordinate citizen engagement and participation in the planning process.
 - (3) To develop and recommend policies, ordinances, development regulations, administrative procedures, and other means for carrying out plans in a coordinated and efficient manner.
 - (4) To review applications for amendments to the text zoning map and make recommendations on such amendments to the city council.
 - (5) To hear and decide special use permits in accordance with Quasi-judicial procedures specified in G.S. 160D-406.
 - (6) To perform any other related duties that the governing board may direct.
- (b) The planning commission's members shall serve as members of the Hickory Board of Adjustment. Members shall serve terms in accordance with Section 2-97 of this Chapter. The board shall hear and decide all matters upon which it is required to pass under any statute or development regulation adopted under this Chapter 160D.

Section 2: Severability.

If any portion of this Section is for any reason held invalid or unconstitutional by any Court of competent jurisdiction, such portion shall be deemed severable, and such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions hereof.

Section 3: Repealed.

All ordinances or provisions of the Hickory City Code of Ordinances which are not in conformance with the provisions of the Amendment occurring herein are repealed as of the effective date of this Ordinance.

Section 4: Effective Date.

This Ordinance shall become effective immediately upon adoption.

B. Departmental Reports:

1. Racial Disparities Report Update and Next Steps – Presentation by City Manager Warren Wood.

City Manager Warren Wood presented a PowerPoint presentation Strategies to Address Racial Disparities in Upward Mobility in the community. He commented maybe a better title may have been Strategies to Begin Addressing. This was going to be the first few steps of a marathon. This was not a sprint. A lot of these issues have been decades or generations in the making and there was not going to be a silver bullet. He advised he would discuss: the timeline; a brief summary of the report; how they might go about improving access to economic opportunity in the community; roles the various organizations play in that; ten initial strategies; and next steps beyond that.

City Manager Warren Wood started with the timeline. Last summer they received some requests and comments about racial disparities in the community, the City commissioned a study to begin studying what those actually were and the degree to which the disparities existed. They started that process with the Western Piedmont Council of Governments (WPCOG) in August of 2020. It was an 81- page report and was very extensive. It covered a dozen different topics and sub- topics; income, poverty, unemployment, educational attainment, homeownership, minority business ownership, and there was also a lot of subcategories. It was very thorough. It looked at the American Community Survey data which was a 4-year rolling average of demographic and economic information related to that. They got the results back in January. The WPCOG came and did a presentation. They followed that up with engaging some of the community partners that were involved in workforce and employment and other issues. They put together a special workshop on racial disparities at the Community College in February. They had K-64, Catawba Valley Community College (CVCC), the Workforce Development Board, and also had a lot of good public comment and suggestions that came out of that. That was a good meeting. Since then, they had been working with various groups in the community to come up with a variety of strategies on how they might start addressing some of these issues particularly from a job employment economic development perspective and making sure everybody was having an opportunity to participate in the local economy.

City Manager Warren Wood discussed what the report revealed. It absolutely revealed there were disparities based on race in the community in a variety of categories. They saw that minorities constituted a growing percentage of Hickory's workforce and the region's traditional population was aging and that trend would continue to occur in the region. They were going to see a growth in minority populations in the community coming up in the next generation, particularly. It was imperative that the workforce had the skill sets necessary to participate and succeed in the economy of tomorrow. There was also a concern about a skills gap crisis that would involve the engagement of school age students early and educating them on the training expertise that they would need to be successful in the new economy.

City Manager Warren Wood referred to the PowerPoint and displayed a sampling of the report. This report would set a benchmark so they could measure. He advised he would talk about how frequently they would measure progress being made in various categories that were measured over time. They could get a feel for what was working and what was not working. They were not necessarily married to the strategies, and they were very flexible and would be able to change as they need to. There were disparities. On average the minority participation in the workforce was higher than white due to the aging. There were some disparities in the unemployment rate particularly, so that would be a measure. Additionally, household income, this was stark. He pointed out the African American average income, household income, \$25,000; Asian Americans were actually \$66,000, and Hispanic \$29,000. There were some pretty significant disparities in household income amongst those groups. He referred to the PowerPoint of poverty statistics. He pointed out the white poverty numbers compared to the minority numbers. The minority numbers were double what the white poverty rate was, that was a major issue. That would begin setting a benchmark to work from. He mentioned SNAP, which was a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, it was formerly the food stamp program, the

numbers were similar in that. The minority community was triple what the white numbers were for those SNAP benefits. He advised there were dozens of different measures that they have out of the report, so they would be able to again set the benchmark and measures and move forward to see what kind of progress was being made in some of these areas. The very basic fundamental concept, a good paying job was the surest way to avoid poverty. The questions were how can individuals prepare for and connect to those employment opportunities as they occur? That was the challenge. How do they get people prepared and get people connected to the job opportunities that were occurring in the community?

City Manager Warren Wood discussed building that foundation. For most, building a foundation enables them to be successful, and it starts at home, and it also starts typically with the public school system. The City's challenge was they try to provide safe communities and good infrastructure. The City does not do a lot in the home per se, and the same for the school system. They City has relationships with the school system, but the City does not fund the school system, and they were not the board for the school system. They have limitations on what they can do in those areas. For most folks, generally the foundation that was laid was laid in those two places. They got some statistics from the school system, rough averages, at Hickory High about 50 percent of the kids were going to go off to a four-year school. The other 50 percent were going to stay here and start working or go to community college. There was a small percentage that may go into the military. They have about 50 percent of the kids that are coming out of Hickory High as an example that are generally going to stay in the community. For those kids, to be able to take advantage of opportunities, K-64 goes into the school system and tells people, educates kids on the opportunities in the community, here are the tracks you need to get on for what you are interested in to be successful in those areas. That was what they do. They were about workforce development and going into the schools and talking about those tracks for various careers in our community. Oftentimes kids will go to CVCC. They have associates programs, certificates, and that was a great leap board into the work environment. The Western Piedmont Workforce Development Board were all about connecting individuals to those opportunities and working with them on a one-on-one basis to make sure that they got everything in order to compete in the industry that they want to enter into. That was very fundamentally how that works.

City Manager Warren Wood discussed K-64. K-64 was an economic development initiative that worked with learners of all ages, kindergarten to retirement, to ensure they have job ready skills needed to meet current and future workforce demands in Catawba County. They go into every public school, every high school and they expose kids to various opportunities that exist right here in Catawba County and here was what they need to do to compete for employment in those industries, in terms of the skills that they would need. They provide all the kids with state-of-the-art technology. They have Chromebooks that they hand-out to every kid in the Catawba County public schools and Hickory public schools and the Newton schools all have Chromebooks that are assigned to them and MiFi devices, if they do not have internet at home in order to be able to get on the internet. They also teach soft skills, which was important for this generation. There was so much with the computer, some of the soft skills were getting lost, so they focus on that. They connect individual students with local employers for job shadowing, internships, work study programs, and apprenticeships. These are kids that were not going off to the four-year school out of town. K-64 engages students of all ages and preparing them for a viable, sustainable career right here in Catawba County. If it did not exist, this would be one of the strategies that he would have listed. It was relatively new and with COVID everything had been kind of sideways. This was a very powerful tool in the community, and it was unique. Very few communities have a program like this, and it was funded by Catawba County.

City Manager Warren Wood discussed Catawba Valley Community College (CVCC) for kids that want to go to community college here in town. They have 5,000 students enrolled at CVCC. The demographic breakdown was really interesting. It was not 100 percent, but it came close to reflecting the community. CVCC had done a really good job with their student enrollment of reflecting what the community looked like. He referred to the PowerPoint and pointed out the average age and the youth of the students at CVCC. They had a variety of dozens of career paths at CVCC from associates degrees to certificates. It was not unlimited, but it was very vast. The Workforce Solutions Complex that they had was like nothing else in the State of North Carolina. It was extremely unique. They had the virtual hospital, and there was probably nothing like that on the eastern seaboard for community college. They had done a really good job at

CVCC with their facilities and the programs that they had developed for people here in the community.

City Manager Warren Wood discussed Western Piedmont Workforce Development Board. Their job was to connect job seekers with job opportunities. These numbers were from their last full year of operation without COVID. That particular year they were engaged by 15,000 job seekers. Those 15,000 jobseekers received over 100,000 career services. Each job seeker may have multiple contacts with them. They may have issues with a criminal background record, not have a high school diploma, they need their GED, transportation issues with kids or themselves. Their job was to help them overcome those barriers. They work with people on a one-on-one basis. That year, they had 187 recruiting events. They worked with individual businesses, and they had over \$600,000 worth of job training scholarships and paid internships that they offered. This was for the metro area, people in the four-county region.

City Manager Warren Wood discussed the opportunity here in Hickory. He advised that Wendy Johnson was Director of the Workforce Development Board of the COG. She said every week she hears from employers that they need people, meaning employees. There were over 8,000 job openings in the four-county region right now. If they were in a community that did not have a robust economy and did not have these job opportunities, then this would be a daunting task to try to improve these numbers, but there was opportunity here, so that was a good thing.

City Manager Warren Wood advised they had developed 10 initial strategies, most of which were going to revolve around employment and economic development opportunities and how they connect individuals to those opportunities. He made a point of saying 10 initial strategies, they may come in and add some. They wanted it to be manageable, to be something they felt like they controlled, but they could also be flexible and adjust on the fly if need be if something was not working. 1) Job Creation – They might say they were already doing job creation. That was right. If they were not creating jobs in this community, they would never move these numbers and the community would suffer as a whole. They have got to create new, good paying jobs in the community. In fact, Council would have a closed session tonight and there was another opportunity for really good paying jobs. The average annual salary in Catawba County was \$44,000, and this potential opportunity was much higher than that. They want to continue to raise the bar in employment pay as well. The best way to improve one's economic outlook was to secure a good paying job. They were focused on that. They work with the Economic Development Corporation (EDC). He noted that Mr. Scott Millar was present to present in closed session to Council. Over the last 10-years they had created 4,500 new jobs here in Catawba County, all paying above the average wage. They want to keep moving the bar up on that. The City would continue to place a major priority or focus on creating good paying employment opportunities for the residents.

City Manager Warren Wood discussed 2) Connecting People to Local Job Opportunities. The challenge was how do they connect individuals to those local job opportunities? They were creating the jobs and they need to make sure they were connecting local people to those opportunities. One area where there was a barrier was individuals getting the information about those employment opportunities. It could be difficult to locate if you do not know where to look or navigating the application process could be challenging. They were going to establish a database for local jobs. Those databases already exists but they would be able to provide that information to individuals or groups who want to receive it. They would be able to push that out to individuals who want to know where the opportunities were in the community, how much they pay, and what companies they were with and where they were located. That was connecting individuals.

City Manager Warren Wood discussed 3) Support efforts to create a Training Facility that Specialized in Future and Emerging Career Paths. The individuals had to be prepared. It was not a one-way street. They had to be prepared to take advantage of these opportunities as they arise. They wanted to support efforts to create a training facility that specializes in future and emerging career path. You think about the traditional industry in Hickory, that was changing. They do not want to have another generation left behind because they do not have the skill sets for what was going to be needed for the future. CVCC does an outstanding job with that. They do some of the mechatronics, and robotics, and all that, but there were some gaps. There were some organizations in the community that were seeking the development of a high profile regional vocational training facility to provide training skill development opportunities and

ideally that would be in Hickory. He gave some examples, Ag-tech, Bio-tech BioPharma, Energy Systems, communications systems, as well as some existing traditional industry. Filling the gap in providing training to create those skill sets for these jobs of the future. That would be a multimillion-dollar investment. There were some conversations and movement underway to try to make that happen. They were excited about what that might be.

City Manager Warren Wood discussed 4) Support the Catawba County Chamber of Commerce in their efforts to educate companies on the value of having a diverse workforce. The Chamber rolled out an effort to educate local companies on the value of having a diverse workforce. They recently had a virtual summit. Some of the statistics from that, the diverse companies have over a two times higher cash flow per employee. Eighty percent of employees they value inclusive policies in the workplace. Ethnically diverse communities were 35 percent more likely to increase revenue. There were all kinds of benefits, and they need to continue to educate the local companies on the value of diversifying their workforce because that was an issue with some companies. That would be an ongoing effort and they would support the Chamber.

City Manager Warren Wood discussed 5) Form a Workforce Development Working Group. This was important. There were multiple organizations working in this employment world, public organizations, they do not do a lot of collaboration or coordination. He thought that was a gap. The main entities involved in that were K-64, NC Works Career Center, CVCC, and the Catawba County EDC. He had talked to every group, and they were all excited about forming a working group composed of senior management to help develop solutions to employment barriers such as transportation, childcare, if someone has a criminal record, or no high school diploma. Some of the things the City was already involved in. The City has a partnership with Greenway Transit, the Soup Kitchen, and some private industries to provide transportation to folks who do not have it to employment. He thought the City was a third financial partner in that. The City also has Mr. Casey McCall who engages the homeless community and trying to get them employment opportunities and get them connected there. The Police Department has Mr. Charles Mackey who has worked for years in helping individuals who may have criminal records overcome that to get employment opportunities. He knew the Workforce Development Board does the same thing. How do they coordinate those types of services and maximizing? Where are they duplicating? Where can they cobble resources together to reach more people? Those types of conversations amongst that group were not happening today.

City Manager Warren Wood discussed 6) Promote Small Business Development Assistance. They saw out of the report, there was a disparity in minority business ownership in Hickory. Hickory was known for its entrepreneurial tradition and Hickory was generally unrepresented with minorities and business ownership. Mr. Jeff Neuville, runs the CVCC Small Business Center, and does an outstanding job. They provide free business startup assistance. The City will partner with CVCC in promoting that center and provide space for them to conduct seminars or workshops on how to start and grow a business here in Hickory so they could utilize the City's facilities in assisting with that and partnering with them to do.

City Manager Warren Wood discussed 7) Support the community's efforts to address the needs of the underserved. As an example, the NAACP established an Equity and Inclusion Task Force, and they have five different areas that they were initially focusing on. Those initiatives would serve at risk and underserved students and families. Local churches had offered support to their volunteers and their facilities, and the City would do the same thing. The City would offer their facilities for those types of activities as well. The City could partner, it was a great opportunity to partner with them. The City would do the same thing with Centro Latino or the Hmong Association, or whoever would like to come forward and do some of that sort of work, the City would be glad to partner with them and help address the needs of underserved in the community.

City Manager Warren Wood advised this was at one of the meetings they had at the Police Department with members of the NAACP and local faith-based community. 8) Coordinate a Pre-summer event in the community to inform parents and school aged children of educational and recreational activities available to them this summer. They had a great idea to hold an event to keep kids busy during the summer. Ms. Jackson just spoke to that. They have the back-to-school event and would continue to have that but have a pre-summer event in the community to inform parents and school aged children of educational and recreational activities available in the summer. This was focused on the

school aged kids and their parents. A couple of weeks ago he thought there was 35 vendors participated and he thought there was 350 people from the community. It was a great event. That exposed people to hear all the services that were provided and the activities this summer that they could get their kids engaged in. It was spreading the word on what was out there for folks that needed it. They would continue to do that. That seemed simple, even the small things are really important. Hopefully, that would make a difference in somebody's life by doing that. They would continue to do that every year. That was a great idea that came out of the community.

City Manager Warren Wood discussed 9) Promote Workforce Diversity within the City of Hickory. Looking internally, let us hold him accountable. Promote workforce diversity within the City of Hickory. The City's workforce looks like the region. They want to look like the people in the community that they serve. Some departments are closer to that than others. As a whole, the City looks more like the region than they do the City in terms of the demographics. He noted that he was not a spring chicken, and the City was going to have people that age out and there was going to be opportunities for folks that come behind him and others that would arise. This would take place over time. They were pursuing that. They have an employment diversity committee set up to find ways to reach communities and individuals that we are not reaching in terms of trying to diversify the City's employment application pool. They would continue to work on that, and staff measures that on a regular basis. That was one of his goals that staff knows about.

City Manager discussed 10) Continue to measure data consistently and transparently and report on progress. He noted this was not a one and done exercise. They would continue to measure data and be transparent on the report and the progress. They had the initial report. They would go through another iteration of this with the 2020 census data, which should be out this fall and they could benchmark that against what occurred in 2010 to see what had improved or not improved. COVID would be mangled up in some of those numbers because the census was going on during that. They do not know the impact that COVID was going to have. They would come back in 2025 with the American Community Survey data and do another iteration, like they just did, and then again with the 2030 census data. That would be four measures in 10-years of this data and how the City was progressing. They would continue to adjust and find out what was working, and what was not working. Take recommendations from the community. The City was trying to stay in their lane. They did not want to reinvent the wheel or do something that somebody was already doing. They believed more collaboration would go a long way in improving these numbers. A lot of this was about holding organizations accountable. The school system as an example. Those numbers came out and they got their benchmark. As a parent, he needs to hold the school system accountable for their performance and everybody else does too. He needs to be held accountable for his performance with the City. That was the way that works and if that was not happening then they do not see progress with this. That was the ten initial strategies.

City Manager Warren Wood discussed the next steps. They would get the census data in the fall and would come back and do this again and see what the results were. They would benchmark those, not only against some of what was in the American Survey data, but also the 2010 census data to see how things have changed. He concluded his presentation of the initial report. He advised Council did not need to adopt it. They were going to move forward with it and adjust it as needed and they would continue to report back.

Alderwoman Patton asked if he would engage Western Piedmont Council of Governments to do the same with the census.

City Manager Warren Wood replied there were other organizations out there that do it. They did a great job. They were looking at some other organizations that may have access to some additional information. It could be them, or it may be another group, but it would be the same sort of format.

Alderman Zagaroli asked if there would be a website shortly for job opportunities.

City Manager Warren Wood responded the City would have data off websites available to push out to individuals that were interested in knowing where these jobs were and what they pay, and that sort of thing. To make it more easily accessible and give people an idea where to go find it.

Alderman Zagaroli asked if that would be through the City's system.

City Manager Warren Wood replied yes. The City would do that from here.

Alderman Seaver asked when he planned on putting together a Task Force.

City Manager Warren Wood advised that would be a working group of K-64, CVCC, Workforce Development Board and the EDC. That would happen probably almost immediately. They would start coordinating. Here are the programs they have, where do they overlap, where can they work together on some things and get more bandwidth or more success on some of these initiatives that they were all under. As an example, the City had a program where they help people with felony convictions gain employment. The Workforce Development Board has the same thing. How can they work together and not against one another on those sorts of things?

Alderman Seaver inquired how the makeup was going to be done.

City Manager Warren Wood asked in terms of on that committee. He advised it would-be high-level management from each one of those organizations because they want to be able to make decisions and not have to run it through.

Alderwoman Williams thought that it would be helpful because they even have people here that have worked with other groups. But even within that work group that the City was doing to have maybe an advisory committee made up of some community groups as well as she would include the Board of Education. That was such a key component in the early stages of funneling people into what they were talking about.

City Manager Warren Wood advised they were going to start with this initial group and then they could talk about growing it, it was workforce development.

Alderwoman Williams commented they do not have to be part of that group, but also make sure they have a core group of outside groups that were working in the same way to connect and advise.

City Manager Warren Wood responded absolutely.

Alderman Wood thought there was an opportunity from an education standpoint. Something he sees in his job as a recruiter was the perception if they go off and get a college degree, a four-year degree, that was a guaranteed pass into the workforce and that was not the case. That leads to underemployment, which was just as bad and there was a perception that, "oh I have this education, I deserve a job at this level" and there was a disconnect there. There was a difference between a four-year degree and job training. He thought that was an opportunity to educate and inform people.

City Manager Warren Wood replied absolutely, yes. Four-year degrees were not the fit for everybody. And that was okay. There were different paths that people can take. It was educating people on what those paths look like. What was the compensation in this field? What was the work like? And exposing people.

Alderman Wood interjected and the preparation to get them to that point.

Mayor Guess thought this was a very good next step. He appreciated the fact that the NAACP brought this to Council's attention in the beginning. They had said they needed some time to analyze things and they needed to put together a program, and they needed to build relationships and partnerships and get some folks involved. They were certainly moving in that direction. They had already mentioned the Western Piedmont Council of Governments and they were a tremendous help in all of this as well as CVCC and the Chamber and other things. He mentioned the new Superintendent Mr. Brian Taylor who was just appointed. Obviously, they would build a relationship and have meetings with him and see what kind of concerns and ideas that he has. He thought this was a really good next step and these 10 things were certainly things that the City could address. He thought that City Manager Warren Wood hit the nail on the head by saying, we need to stay in our lane. They need to partner and have the relationships and they need to work together, but they need to do what they can do as a City and as far as he was concerned, they were on the right track as far as that was concerned. He thanked City Manager Warren Wood, because he knew he had put a lot of work into this. This was not something that he was tasked to do, and he thought, "okay, I'll do it and be done with it". He put his heart and soul into it. He knew that he made a lot of the contacts and a lot of the relationships and a lot of questions and stuff like that. He thought that he went

far beyond what was expected, perhaps in this particular case. He thanked City Manager Warren Wood personally for that. He knew staff helped him with it, but they kind of put this on him to head them in the direction and he thought they were in the right direction and on the right path. They appreciated that. He asked for any other comments, questions or concerns related to this.

2. Appointments to Boards and Commissions

Mayor Guess advised it was that time of year where people rotate off of the City's Boards and Commissions. He advised if there was a Board or Commission that anyone had a particular interest in, there was a lot of ways that they could find out information about that. They could contact Council directly. That information was available also on the City's website and various other means. If anyone were interested or thought that they may be interested, or maybe did not even know what they were, they could point them in the right direction as far as that was concerned.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3 Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)

At-Large (Council Appoints)	Joan Long (Eligible for Reappointment/Willing to Serve Again)
At-Large (Council Appoints)	Brandon Hedrick (Eligible for Reappointment/Willing to Serve Again)

Mayor Guess nominated Joan Long and Brandon Hedrick for reappointment as At-Large Representatives on the Business Development Committee.

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)

At-Large (Council Appoints)	David Myers (Eligible for Reappointment/Willing to Serve Again)
At-Large (Council Appoints)	Cliff Moone (Not Eligible for Reappointment)

Alderman Seaver nominated Greg Schauble as an At-Large Representative on the Citizens Advisory Committee.

Mayor Guess nominated David Myers for reappointment as an At-Large Representative on the Citizens Advisory Committee.

COMMUNITY APPEARANCE COMMISSION

(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)

Ward 1 (T. Wood Appoints)	Margaret Nealon (Not Eligible for Reappointment)
At-Large (Outside City but within HRP) (Council Appoints)	VACANT

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL

(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)

African American (Council Appoints)	Lakeisha Ross-Johnson (Eligible for Reappointment/Willing to Serve Again)
Caucasian (Council Appoints)	Mandy Pitts Hildebrand (Eligible for Reappointment/Willing to Serve Again)
Other Minority (Council Appoints)	VACANT
Other Minority (Council Appoints)	VACANT
Other Minority (Council Appoints)	VACANT
Differently Abled and is African American or Other Minority (Council Appoints)	VACANT
Differently Abled (Council Appoints)	Beth Whicker (Not Eligible for Reappointment)

Mayor Guess nominated for reappointment Lakeisha Ross-Johnson as an African American Representative and Mandy Pitts Hildebrand as a Caucasian Representative on the Community Relations Council.

EDC BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR HICKORY

(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms with Unlimited Appointments)

(Appointed by City Council)

Hickory Representative	Stephen Shuford (Eligible for Reappointment)
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HICKORY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

(Term Begins July 1, 2021) (Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms With Unlimited Appointments)

(Appointed by City Council)
Ward 1 (T. Wood Appoints) (3-Year Initial Term)
Ward 2 (C. Williams Appoints) (1-Year Initial Term)
Ward 3 (Seaver Appoints) (2-Year Initial Term)
Ward 4 (D. Williams Appoints) (3-Year Initial Term)
Ward 5 (Zagaroli Appoints) (2-Year Initial Term)
Ward 6 (Patton Appoints) (1-Year Initial Term)
Catawba County Representative (1) (1-Year Initial Term)
(Mayor Appoints with Recommendation from Catawba County)
Catawba County Representative (2) (3-Year Initial Term)
(Mayor Appoints with Recommendation from Catawba County)
Burke County Representative (2-Year Initial Term)
(Mayor Appoints with Recommendation from Burke)

Alderman Wood nominated Bill McBrayer (3-Year Initial Term) as Ward 1 Representative on the Hickory Regional Planning Commission.

Alderwoman Williams nominated Philip Reed (1-Year Initial Term) as Ward 2 Representative on the Hickory Regional Planning Commission.

Alderman Seaver nominated Junior Hedrick (2-Year Initial Term) as Ward 3 Representative on the Hickory Regional Planning Commission.

Alderwoman Patton nominated Anne Williams (1-Year Initial Term) as Ward 6 Representative on the Hickory Regional Planning Commission.

Mayor Guess nominated Robert Weaver (2-Year Initial Term) as Burke County Representative and Jeff Kerley (1-Year Initial Term) and William Pekman (3-Year Initial Term) (Contingent upon approval from Catawba County Board of Commissioners) on the Hickory Regional Planning Commission.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)
Licensed Architect (Council Appoints) Ernie Sills
(Not Eligible for Reappointment)
At-Large (2) Mary Moorer
(Eligible for Reappointment)
At-Large (3) Samuel E. Hunt
(Eligible for Reappointment)

Mayor Guess nominated Sam Hunt for reappointment as an At-Large Representative on the Historic Preservation Commission.

LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD

(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)
Ward 2 (C. Williams Appoints) Walter C. Smith
(Not Eligible for Reappointment)
Ward 3 (Seaver Appoints) Beth Schauble
(Eligible for Reappointment/Willing to Serve Again)
Ward 6 (Patton Appoints) Gail Miller
(Eligible for Reappointment/Does Not Wish to Serve Again)
At-Large (3) (Mayor Appoints) Mark Thomas
(Eligible for Reappointment)

Alderwoman Williams nominated Julie Voss as Ward 2 Representative on the Library Advisory Board.

Alderman Seaver nominated Beth Schauble for reappointment as Ward 3 Representative on the Library Advisory Board.

Mayor Guess nominated Mark Thomas for reappointment as an At-Large Representative on the Library Advisory Board.

PUBLIC ART COMMISSION

(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)
Ward 1 (T. Wood Appoints) Laurie Childres
(Eligible for Reappointment/Willing to Serve Again)
Ward 4 (D. Williams Appoints) VACANT
At-Large (Mayor Appoints) Laura Costello
(Eligible for Reappointment/Willing to Serve Again)
At-Large (Mayor Appoints) Beth Bowman
(Not Eligible for Reappointment)

Alderman Wood nominated Laurie Childres for reappointment as Ward 1 Representative on the Public Art Commission.

Mayor Guess nominated Laura Costello for reappointment as an At-Large Representative on the Public Art Commission.

PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY

(Terms Expiring 6-30; 5-Year Terms) (Appointed by the Mayor)

Position 3 (Mayor Appoints) VACANT

Position 9 (Mayor Appoints) (Unexpired Term of Rebecca Clements) VACANT

RECREATION AND SPORTS TOURISM COMMISSION

(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)

Ward 1 (T. Wood Appoints) Susan Bisulca
(Eligible for Reappointment/Willing to Serve Again)

Ward 5 (Zagaroli Appoints) David Crosby
(Not Eligible for Reappointment)

Ward 6 (Patton Appoints) Steve Snyder
(Eligible for Reappointment/Willing to Serve Again)

At-Large Minority (1) (Council Appoints) Eric Brandon
(Eligible for Reappointment/Willing to Serve Again)

Alderman Wood nominated Susan Bisulca for reappointment as Ward 1 Representative for the Recreation and Sports Tourism Commission.

Alderwoman Patton nominated Steve Snyder for reappointment as Ward 6 Representative for the Recreation and Sports Tourism Commission.

Mayor Guess nominated Eric Brandon for reappointment as an At-Large Minority Representative on the Recreation and Sports Tourism Commission.

RECYCLING ADVISORY BOARD

(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)

Ward 5 (Zagaroli Appoints) Robert Warmuth
(Not Eligible for Reappointment)

At-Large (Council Appoints) William Garrard
(Eligible for Reappointment/Willing to Serve Again)

Alderman Zagaroli nominated Dr. Grey Winfield as Ward 5 Representative on the Recycling Advisory Board.

Mayor Guess nominated William Garrard for reappointment as an At-Large Representative on the Recycling Advisory Board.

UNIVERSITY CITY COMMISSION

(Terms Expiring 6-30; 2-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)

At-Large (not including ETJ) (Council Appoints) Ryan Edwards
(Eligible for Reappointment/Willing to Serve Again)

Mayor Guess nominated Ryan Edwards for reappointment as an At-Large Representative on the University City Commission.

WESTERN PIEDMONT REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY POLICY BOARD

Karen Dickerson – Current Primary

John Marshall – Current Alternate

Recommendation of Karen Dickerson as Primary and Cameron McHargue as Alternate.

Mayor Guess nominated Karen Dickerson for reappointment as primary delegate on the Western Piedmont Regional Transit Authority Policy Board.

Mayor Guess moved, seconded by Alderwoman Patton approval of the above nominations. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Guess thanked the citizens that had served in the past, he knew there were some in attendance at the meeting. If there was anything that they were interested in serving on in the future, please let Council know.

C. Presentation of Petitions and Requests

XII. Matters Not on Agenda (requires majority vote of Council to consider)

XIII. General Comments by Members of Council, City Manager or City Attorney of a Non-Business Nature

XIV. Closed Session Per NC General Statutes 143-318.11(a)(4) to consult with the attorneys regarding the following: (Action on these items, if any, will occur in Open Session)

Mayor Guess moved, seconded by Alderwoman Patton, that Council go into closed session to consult with the attorneys regarding a potential economic development. The motion carried unanimously.

1. Discussion of Potential Economic Development - NCGS §143-318.11(a)(4)

Council convened to closed session at approximately 7:57 p.m.

Council reconvened to open session at approximately 8:19 p.m.

No action was taken upon return to open session.

XV. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

Mayor

City Clerk